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Strategic Context

Our Vision

All British Columbians fully participating in a healthy arts and cultural community that is recognized for its excellence.

Our Mission

The British Columbia Arts Council supports the arts and cultural community to enable it to achieve its creative, social and economic potential by providing financial assistance, advocacy and public education.

Our Values

We have a set of fundamental beliefs that underlie all that we do. Our involvement with Arts and Culture is governed by:

- The belief that a vibrant arts and cultural community is essential to a healthy society
- The belief in artistic excellence
- The belief in inclusiveness
- The belief in diversity of artistic practice in all art forms.

As an organization we are governed by:

- Our desire to embrace and celebrate the future while seeking to preserve our past
- Our belief in transparency and accountability
- Our adherence to the principles of equality, merit and independence.

Environmental Scan

Public Funding of Arts and Culture

Globalization of the cultural marketplace and the growing pressure to reduce protectionist barriers threaten public support mechanisms and increase the level of competition with foreign product.

Public support for the arts and cultural sector is shared between federal, provincial and municipal governments. Current expenditure levels suggest there is an opportunity to increase public sector spending. On the other hand, declining engagement of the arts by the public education system will have a long-term impact on the arts and culture workforce and on future audiences.

The traditional model of public sector support is changing. There is a continuing expansion of initiatives in the public sector designed to provide more quantifiable public accountability and transparency. Also, there is an increasing emphasis on self-reliance and on the development of cultural product as opposed to artistic creation. These factors impose demands on the delivery of financial assistance programs and on administrative and managerial resources.

Management and Governance in the Arts and Culture Sector

Unattractive working conditions, including low remuneration and uncertain security, increase the difficulty in filling managerial positions, particularly in organizations involved in traditional arts disciplines. Ensuring managerial and governance capacity, particularly at the board level, continues to be a significant challenge for the sector.

Demographic trends, including urbanization, cultural diversity and an aging population, have implications for the arts and cultural sector, increasing the challenge of serving the people of the province.

New Technologies and Infrastructure

Technological change, particularly digitalization, is transforming the cultural sector, including the means of production, the products and the distribution channels.

The rapid expansion of the broadcasting sector and the growing convergence with internet-based distribution systems represent a continuing demand for new programming, expanding certain media and transforming the cultural sector as a whole. With a larger number of media outlets, however, other implications include narrower (smaller) audiences and smaller amounts of remuneration.

The increasing sophistication of the marketplace, in part a result of more exposure to international products, is resulting in demands for higher levels of professional standards and increased capital requirements. While the costs of production and the requirements for market entry have increased, computer-based communication systems are in significant ways lowering the costs of distribution.

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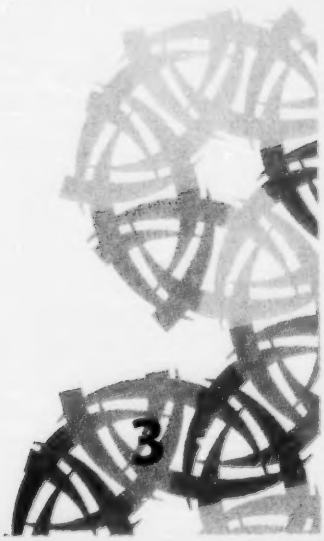
Economic Contribution of Arts and Culture

The global economy continues its transformation from one based primarily on the exchange of goods to one dominated by the exchange of information. Artists and creators, who are essentially communicators, have central roles in the process and demand for creative skills and talent is expanding exponentially. At the same time, the opportunities for BC cultural producers and products to explore foreign markets are enhanced.

The dramatic growth of BC's film and television production industries provides opportunities for artists and creators in the performing arts, literary arts and the craft and design sectors. New media, sound recording and other cultural industries present similar opportunities for economic growth, but will require a public policy focus similar to that provided to the film industry.

Diversity

The diversity of the Canadian population, particularly evident in urban BC, allows contribution from many distinct cultures and the opportunity to explore new means of expression. BC's First Nations have a highly developed tradition of artistic expression that could provide significant economic and social benefits to that community.



Program Overview

Mandate of the BC ARTS COUNCIL

The Province of British Columbia recognizes the significant contribution made by the arts and cultural community to the life of the province and is committed to its support and development.

Through the British Columbia Arts Council, the province offers programs that support the artistic and cultural community. These programs assist community and professional arts and cultural organizations and individual artists, as well as encouraging greater access to cultural and artistic experiences throughout the province.

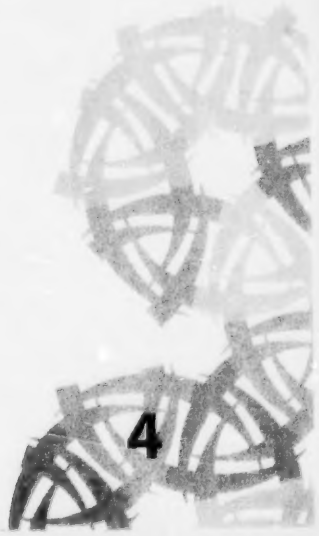
The British Columbia Arts Council is an independent agency established by the Province of British Columbia to:

- Provide support for arts and culture in British Columbia;
- Provide persons and organizations with the opportunity to participate in the arts and culture in British Columbia, and;
- Provide an open, accountable and neutrally administered process for managing funds for British Columbia arts and culture.

In performing its duties, the British Columbia Arts Council must:

- Consult with artists, arts and cultural organizations, governments and other interested communities;
- Allocate the money appropriated annually for the Council by the Legislature, and;
- Support arts and culture through the following:
  - Public education, research and advocacy;
  - Awarding grants, and;
  - Production and distribution of information on the Council and arts and culture in BC.

The Council consists of 15 members who are broadly representative of the regions, cultural diversity and artistic communities of British Columbia. Members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council who also designates the chair and the vice-chair of the Council.



Summary of Goals

GOAL 1

Artistic excellence, expression and innovation recognized and encouraged

GOAL 2

Healthy, sustainable arts and cultural organizations

GOAL 3

Opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities available throughout the province

GOAL 4

Increasing diversity in cultural traditions recognized and supported and new art forms encouraged

GOAL 5

Maximize the contribution of arts and cultural activity to the economic growth of the province

GOAL 6

Effective, respected and efficient administrative and evaluative processes

Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

GOAL 1 Artistic excellence, expression and innovation recognized and encouraged

OBJECTIVES

- An adjudication process that identifies and supports artistic excellence
- Opportunities and resources for artists and creators to train, experiment and create, and reach an audience

STRATEGIES

- Maximize the diversity and professionalism of input into decision making
- Maintain excellence as a primary standard for the adjudication process
- Provide financial support to enable artists to train, experiment and create

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Council provides support to a wide variety of professionals, and uses an inclusive, open and accountable process to adjudicate applications. The best indicator of our success in recognizing and encouraging excellence is the extent of our financial support, and the variety of professionals supported.

1.1 **We will measure and report on the number of professionals whose work is considered and supported by the Council. We will also report on the diversity of the backgrounds of the professionals supported.**

As indicators of the achievement of this goal we will report on:

- The number of applicants for support
- The success rate of applicants
- The funds distributed, by type of activity and by region
- The number of recipients

The annual report of the Council will include detailed information regarding recipients and amounts. Given the nature of the activity, we cannot set targets for diversity or excellence. In the section entitled "financial resources" we report on forecasts for overall funding and disbursements by the Council.

GOAL 2 Healthy, sustainable arts and cultural organizations

OBJECTIVES

- A funding process that recognizes and supports arts and cultural organizations' potential to contribute to the province's arts and cultural development
- An adequate funding base for arts and cultural organizations
- Supportive public policies and programs for the arts and culture in BC

STRATEGIES

- Provide an independent, professional adjudication process
- Provide timely, reliable, and sustainable funding for organizations
- Design Council programs and policies that reflect organizations' needs
- Influence provincial policies that affect BC Arts Council organizations

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Assessing the health and sustainability of arts and cultural organizations is a subjective task, and somewhat difficult to report on in the aggregate. The Council has chosen the following indicators as being the most suitable:

2.1 Sectoral assessments of organizations, based on the professional opinion of BC Arts Council adjudicators.

It is proposed that over a five-year cycle, the Council provide an assessment of the condition of organizations in each sector, focusing on selected sectors each year.

Our target for this is that assessments do not show a decline over time, starting from a baseline to be established as each sector is evaluated.

2.2 Financial Health of Arts and Cultural organizations

The Council will summarize the financial condition of BC's arts and cultural organizations in terms of existing deficits or surpluses. The Council believes this is a reliable proxy measure of the overall health and sustainability of the organizations.
Our target is that collectively the sector is at least at a break-even state.

Forecasts of overall funding for organizations is included in the "financial resources" section below.

GOAL 3 Opportunities to participate in arts and cultural activities available throughout the province

OBJECTIVES

- Awareness and appreciation of arts and culture in BC schools
- Programs accessible to organizations and individual artists province-wide
- Arts opportunities in communities where geographic, economic or other factors limit access

STRATEGIES

- Provide financial support for touring artists and school presentations
- Support organizations and artists located in the regions
- Promote awareness of Arts Council programs and opportunities in regional communities

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Ensuring that artists and professionals have access to opportunities no matter where they live in the province is an important aspect of the Council's work.

KEY INDICATORS OF OUR SUCCESS ARE:

3.1 Geographic distribution of awards

While recognizing that arts and cultural professionals have a tendency to migrate to urban centres, a valid measure is the geographic distribution of awards. The Council will report on this annually and also on trends over time. Our target is that all regions will be represented in Council awards.

3.2 Level of engagement of professional expertise from regional communities

A useful indicator of the Council's success in engaging regional communities is the inclusion of representatives from all regions in the awards process. The Council will report on this indicator by showing the number of professionals from each region included in the process. Our target is that all regions will be represented in the award process.

GOAL 4 Increasing diversity in cultural traditions recognized and supported and new art forms encouraged

OBJECTIVES

» Broader and diversified kinds of cultural traditions and artistic activity available to the public
» Opportunities for artists to interpret, explore and create using new technologies and art forms

STRATEGIES

» Ensure the adjudication processes, funding and program guidelines:
  a) encourage participation by artists of different cultural traditions
  b) reflect evolving creative practices

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Council recognizes the importance of maintaining our heritage, while remaining open to new forms of creative expression, whether they originate from diverse traditions of new communities in BC, or from experiments with new media and art forms. We have chosen the following as indicators of our success in remaining open to diversity and innovation:

4.1 A summary of the range of cultural communities included in the adjudication process

4.2 A summary of evolving creative practices included in the adjudication process

4.3 A summary of the Council's efforts to ensure program flexibility to accept innovation; this will include a summary of projects considered

This dimension of the Council's work is not amenable to target-setting, beyond a general goal of inclusiveness.

GOAL 5 Maximize the contribution of arts and cultural activity to the economic growth of the province

OBJECTIVES

» Artists and arts/cultural organizations assisted to reach new markets and develop new products and services
» National and international recognition of BC artists and arts and cultural organizations

STRATEGIES

» Support touring/market development and attendance at international showcases
» Assist organizational strategic development
» Support arts in education and training and development of artists

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Artistic and cultural production can be an enormous source of economic benefit to the province. The new economy is based on intellectual and creative products, which command an increasing share of GDP. In this sense, all of the Council's work supports the economic development of British Columbia. As a matter of practicality, the Council's indicators for this goal reflect the Council's work in helping professionals achieve recognition, either internationally or in their communities.

5.1 International markets developed and artists supported for international touring

5.2 Awards and recognition achieved by BC artists and cultural organizations

5.3 Performances and residencies by artists in the public school system

5.4 A summary of professional development opportunities provided by Council

This dimension of Council work is not amenable to target setting. Forecasts for funding are included in the "financial resources" section below.

GOAL 6 Effective, respected and efficient administration and evaluative processes

OBJECTIVES

» An effective policy and program development process
» Cost effective program administration
» An equitable, transparent and accountable adjudication process

STRATEGIES

» Continuously evaluate program benefits
» Consult with the Public
» Provide an independent and merit-based evaluation process
» Control costs

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Council's primary concern in administering the adjudication process is to ensure that it is open, inclusive, transparent, accountable and efficient.

6.1 Acceptance of the process by stakeholders

This will be measured by the number of appeals to decisions made by the Council and its system of advisory committees. Our target in this regard will be set after we have gathered baseline data.

6.2 Administrative costs as a percentage of awards

Our target is that administrative costs will remain below 10% of awards.

Resources and Financial Plan

Note: This forecast is based on an assumption of zero increase in Council Funding. Actual allocations are unknown at the time of preparation of this plan. Over the forecast period the Council will seek increased resources to allow it to more effectively meet its mandate of serving the province's arts and cultural communities.

	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4
Grants and Contributions			
Professional Arts Development	$ 8,200,000	$ 8,200,000	$ 8,200,000
Community Arts development	$ 900,000	$ 900,000	$ 900,000
Touring Program	$ 450,000	$ 450,000	$ 450,000
Arts awards-Individuals	$ 950,000	$ 950,000	$ 950,000
Publishing Programs	$ 450,000	$ 450,000	$ 450,000
	$10,950,000	$10,950,000	$10,950,000
Administrative Costs	$ 224,000	$ 224,000	$ 224,000
Total forecast expenditures	**$11,174,000**	**$11,174,000**	**$11,174,000**

Links to Government Priorities

The British Columbia Arts Council contributes to government strategic priorities in the following ways:

BC GOVERNMENT GOAL 4

All British Columbians will have greater opportunities to get the education and training they need.

The Council provides awards to existing and emerging artists and creators across the province to enable them to access training opportunities. (See Council Goal 1)

BC GOVERNMENT GOAL 6

BC's modern economy will work for everyone.

One of the hallmarks of a modern economy is the increasing role played by artistic and intellectual product. The activities funded by the Council contribute to the creation of artistic and intellectual capital, either through facilitating creativity, or through giving people exposure to artistic and creative thought and product in communities across BC.

BC GOVERNMENT GOAL 8

All citizens will be able to lead lives of dignity and security.

The Council contributes materially to this goal in many ways. One particular example is the work of the Council to recognize and nurture artistic expression of First Nation cultures, and its policy to promote ownership by aboriginal communities of their artistic heritage